



Sarasota Housing Authority (SHA)
269 South Osprey Avenue
Sarasota, Florida 34236

Board Meeting
McCown Towers Board Room
January 29, 2025
4:30 P.M.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Taylor called the regular meeting of the Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners to order at 4:32 pm.
- II. **INVOCATION**
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. **ROLL CALL**
Commissioners Present: Chair Ernestine Taylor, Vice Chair John Colón (in at 4:45 pm), Commissioner Jack Meredith, Resident Commissioner Nicole Roman, Commissioner Carolyn Mason, Commissioner Duane Finger and Commissioner David Morgan
Commissioners Not Present: N/A
Invited Attendees: City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch, Valerie Buchand (Resident Council) and Attorneys Ric Gilmore (out at 5:28 pm) & Susanne DeCopain
SHA Personnel: William Russell and Andrea Keddell
- V. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - A. SHA Regular Board Meeting – December 11, 2024
 - Chair Taylor put up the minutes from the December 11, 2024, Regular Board Meeting for approval.
 - Commissioner Morgan made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Meredith seconded the motion. City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch submitted a non-substantive change to the minutes to be corrected.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously. Commissioner Mason voted present.
- VI. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
 - A. SHA Regular Board Agenda – January 29, 2025
 - Chair Taylor put up the agenda for the January 29, 2025, Regular Board Meeting for approval.
 - Commissioner Meredith made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Finger seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.
- VII. **SPECIAL PRESENTATION**
 - A. City Commission Liaison Update
 - City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch reported that City Manager feels that Mr. Russell should present at public comment an upcoming City Commission meeting on Lofts on Lemon fees to open discussion on this topic.

- Mr. Russell asked if Commissioner Ahearn-Koch could see about getting him put on the February 18th City Commission agenda to do a special presentation/SHA update as well as the public comment on the fees.

VIII. PUBLIC PRESENTATION

- A. Ms. Valerie Buchand, Resident Council Member from Janie's Garden, presented the following:
 - Ms. Buchand addressed SHA's response to #5 of the Resident Advisory Board's comments to the 5-Year/Annual Plan stating that she does not bring a hostile workplace and that it's the housing authority that brought a hostile workplace. Feeling strongly does not mean hostility and the truth is the truth, whether it's liked or not. She plans to write a letter to the HUD representatives responsible for receiving the Annual Plan documents to provide the Resident Advisory Board's position to them directly.
 - Ms. Buchand also brought up a continuing situation with Mr. James Hendrix, stating that he's been told he needs to be on the PBV SHA waiting list in order to get an apartment at Amaryllis Park Place.
 - Ms. Buchand reports the residents at McCown Tower are not in favor of a parking garage being built and they've been told but have not been included in the conversation. She further stated that they were recently told during the development workshop held for the Resident Council that residents are stakeholders and should be involved in the decision-making process.
- B. Ms. Marianne Dean, from the Towers/Annex, reported there has been an increase in thefts at the building due to the back door not being locked, no security guard on duty and the front door being broken and wide open after hours. Amazon packages are being taken and other items on people's patios. She would like this to be looked into. She added that with the back door being open construction workers are being allowed into their building, and she questioned if there was active construction going on.
 - Mr. Russell responded that there is currently construction being done on the Annex building on the AC units and fans. So, these workers are allowed to be in the building but will look into the doors being locked after hours.

IX. RESOLUTIONS – ACCEPTED BY CONSENT

- A. Res 25-01: Approval of Annual Plan/5-Year Action Plan (CFP FY23, 24 and 25)
 - B. Res 25-02: Significant Amendment to CFP Budget (FY 23 & 24)
 - C. Res 25-03: Write-Off Approval
 - D. Res 25-04: Approval of Culture Guide Revisions
 - E. Res 25-05: Approval for Lease of Property Office Space
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- Commissioner Meredith pulled E. Resolutions 25-05.
 - Commissioner Mason made a motion to approve the remaining Consent Agenda, Resolutions A. 25-01, B. 25-02, C. 25-03 & D. 25-04. Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

E. Res 25-05: Approval of Lease of Property Office Space

- Mr. Russell explained that SHA is looking to purchase an additional building/property in the current area of its Administration office space that shares the same parking lot. SHA has outgrown the current building and needs additional offices. Mr. Russell is not set on whose offices will move there but SHA may lease out the 2nd floor to an employee or resident. The building is designed as a live/work building and the 2nd floor has its own entrance. SHA will loan funds and have its affiliate, SHFC, purchase and own the building, and SHA will lease the building for use. SHFC would then pay SHA back for the loaned funds. The purchase price is less than what the property was appraised for.
- Commissioner Meredith made a motion to approve Resolutions E. 25-05. Commissioner Finger seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

X. OLD BUSINESS

A. Resident Advisory Board (RAB)/Resident Council – Draft Budget

- Ms. Buchand responded to the board inquiry into Professional Services and Development and Outreach line items. Ms. Buchand maintained that they don't have specifics on what services and/or development opportunities are included because they don't know what will become available to them over the year. With regard to the Outreach line item that is anticipatory of their efforts to reach out to other properties to plan events and do things. Email isn't always available, especially with the elderly residents.
- Commissioner Morgan reiterated that the blanket category of Professional Services and Development is too vague and should be explained further or perhaps that line item should be removed. Ms. Buchand responded that SHA is only providing them with \$23,800, not a full \$30,000, because \$7,200 is for stipends. She states they are aware of what the funds can be used for and what they cannot be used for.
- Mr. Russell provided clarification of the amount of Tenant Participation Funds that HUD requires SHA to provide to the Council per unit ($\$15 \times 247 = \$3,705$) against the amount SHA is actually providing per unit ($\$25 \times 247 = \$6,175$). Given the Board approved \$30,000, this means that SHA is providing the Council an additional \$26,295 over what they are required to budget for them. It was also clarified that the referenced/requested stipend amount of \$200 per month / per council member, is an allowable/regulatory limit by HUD. Anything over that amount would count as income for the council member. The stipends are not a requirement and the approved budget lists \$150 in stipend payments per month to each Resident Council member (5), equaling a total of \$9,000 annually. In past years, approximately \$80 was paid per month to each council member, due to the budget being much less.
- Ms. Buchand added that SHA was good about paying for items and events they wanted to host in the past, but the Council has not seen any money from the vending machines.

- Commissioner Finger suggested changing the Professional Services line item to Training and Professional Development. So the funds could be used to train the resident and those working for the residents to develop skills and abilities to assist the residents. Additional discussion took place regarding this line item and the desire to remove any notation to allow for professional services that SHA already has. Commissioner Morgan again suggested, in an effort to get the budget approved, removing the line item all together. Ms. Buchand states the board is trying to hold the council back. Commissioner Meredith added that SHA has approved an additional \$26,000 on top of the required HUD amount and does not believe this is evidentiary of not helping the council. It was discussed and the board agreed to remove services from the Professional Services and Development line item, changing it to Professional Development, and to remove half of the funds for that line item, changing the amount from \$5,000 to \$2,500.
 - Commissioner Meredith made a motion to accept the budget with the revision to remove services from the Professional Services and Development line item, changing it to Professional Development/Training, and removing half of the funds for that line item, changing the amount from \$5,000 to \$2,500. Commissioner Colón seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.
- B. Development Updates / Redevelopment Report – Calston/Smith & Henzy Not Present
- Commissioner Meredith reported that the new redevelopment report provided by Smith & Henzy was well done.
 - Mr. Russell reported that that the County will be receiving approximately \$201 million in CDBG-DR funds due to the number of storms this season. It is unclear at this point how much of that will be designated for affordable housing. The County has been requested to submit an action plan to HUD within 90 days.
 - McCown II/Garage was not funded by FHFC, so efforts will be made to try to secure other funds. Mr. Russell is also inquiring about the ability to apply for funds to rehab the Annex and bring it up to code.
 - Mr. Russell informed the board that the city website has a survey for people to weigh in on how they feel about the need for affordable housing. He strongly encouraged everyone to sign on and submit their support for funding towards affordable housing. Any person can fill out the survey. Mr. Russell hopes the city will share the data with the county, should there be an abundance of support for affordable housing.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Resident Interest ad hoc Committee Meetings vs Resident-Led, Resident Meetings via Zoom
- Mr. Russell explained SHAARCS reasoning for wanting to host resident-led zoom meetings in place of the more formal ad hoc Resident Interest Board Committee Meetings. This will allow for less formal resident participation and will allow for more feedback from the residents without a 3-minute time limit. Attorney Gilmore added that the meetings would still need to be noticed, and minutes would still need to be taken if board members are invited and there's potential for multiple board member attendance.

- Commissioner Colón made a motion to approve resident-led zoom meetings in place of formal ad hoc Board Committee meetings. Commissioner Roman seconded the motion.

- The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

B. Federal Funds / OMB Updates

- Mr. Russell reported on the pause that recently was placed on federal grants, loans and financial assistance. There was a short period that SHA was concerned it would not be able to pay its Section 8 landlords. However, the Section 8/HCV program and Project-Based Rental Assistance were exempted. SHA did experience some issues drawing down funds, but they were released later in the day. The notice has since been withdrawn.
- Commissioner Morgan suggested SHA should have notices ready for landlords to contact their government representatives should this ever happen to keep pressure on Washington. He states SHA should also have a contingency plan should funds actually get cut or frozen and what SHAs response will/would be.
- William reported the Scott Turner is the Presidents nominee to be the HUD Secretary.

XII. PROGRAM UPDATES – ACCEPTED BY CONSENT

- A. Monthly Financial Statements (Janie’s Garden)
- B. Board Committee Meeting Minutes
- C. Housing Choice Voucher Report
- D. Housing Management Reports
- E. Capital Improvement Report
- F. Resident Services Monthly Report
- G. Resident Advisory Board/Sarasota Housing Authority Agency-Wide Resident Council (SHAARC) Board Report (*not submitted*)

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- Commissioner Colón made a motion to accept the Program Updates Consent Agenda. Commissioner Mason seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

XIII. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS / COMMENTS

- A. Commissioner Colón suggested getting a public adjuster to see if any damage could be claimed from the insurance company to upgrade McCown and Annex. He believed a 2nd opinion would have been a good idea.
- B. Commissioner Mason inquired about Janie’s Garden Phase I and when it comes back to SHA. William responded that SHA is already managing this phase. Commissioner Mason also asked about Janie’s Garden Phase II (Commercial Space) and why it’s so difficult for businesses to lease space there. She knows of a businesswoman, Ms. Williams, who has been unsuccessful in getting a lease. Mr. Russell will look into this and report on it at the next meeting.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 5:41 pm.